GENRES FOR THE EMOTIONS
Horror, Gentle Reads, Women’s Lives and Relationships, Romance

Appeal Characteristics:
Tone ranges from terrifying to romantic to comfortable to provocative
Tone and the characters are more important than action
Descriptive, adjective-rich language

HORROR NOVELS:
Nightmare tone evokes fear in reader
Monsters and other supernatural/paranormal elements
Graphic violence, profanity, explicit sex often enhance impact of story
Descriptive language
Haunted, shattered protagonists
Unexpected attacks jolt reader
Horror can be beaten down but not destroyed
Menace can’t be explained rationally

Not Horror:
Paranormal (Charlaine Harris’s Sookie Stackhouse series)
Serial Killers (Thomas Harris’s Hannibal)
Supernatural Thrillers (Justin Cronin’s The Passage and Guillermo Del Toro and Chuck Hogan’s The Strain)

Just because there’s a zombie...
Horror (Nate Kenyon’s Sparrow Rock)
Not Horror (Mira Grant’s Feed)

Horror Classics:
Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein
Bram Stoker’s Dracula
M. R. James’s ghost stories
Shirley Jackson’s The Haunting of Hill House
William Peter Blatty’s The Exorcist
Anne Rice’s Interview with the Vampire

Authors to Know:
Stephen King
King of Horror
Sympathetic but haunted protagonists
Nightmare situations
Often violence and profanity (more gruesome as Richard Bachman)
Also good short stories
Storyteller par excellence

Ramsey Campbell
Psychological Horror
Disturbing, unsettling novels
Supernatural events
Deranged characters
Lyrical writing
Often erotic and violent
Crossover with Literary Fiction and Psychological Suspense

**Joe Hill**
Stephen King’s son
Moody, atmospheric, menacing
Vulnerable characters
Colorful language
Graphic Violence
Short stories and novels
Graphic Novel series

**Brian Keene**
Explicit violence, sex, profanity
Fast-paced
Vivid characterizations
Chilling, menacing, haunting
Crossover with Thrillers and Suspense

**Jonathan Maberry**
Novels, short stories, nonfiction, graphic novels
Menacing atmosphere
Fast pace
Humor
Gore
Crossover with Thrillers and Suspense

**Crossover**
Literary Fiction (*The Little Stranger* by Sarah Waters)
Adrenaline (*Jaws* by Peter Benchley, *Night Film* by Marisha Pessl)
Fantasy (The Dark Tower series by Stephen King, Meredith Gentry series by Laurell K. Hamilton, Women of the Otherworld series by Kelley Armstrong)
Paranormal Romance (*Bite* short stories by Laurell K. Hamilton, Charlaine Harris, Maryjanice Davidson, Angela Knight, Vickie Taylor)
Historical Fiction (*The Terror* by Dan Simmons)
Mystery (Joe Pitt series by Charlie Huston)
Nonfiction (*The Amityville Horror* by Jay Hanson, *Weird US* by Mark Moran and Mark Sceurman, Jonathan Maberry)

**Ultimate Crossover**
Dean R. Koontz
Horror, Fantasy, Adrenaline, Science Fiction

Seth Grahame-Smith
Classics, Humor, Horror, Sometimes History

**Trends**
Not as popular in novel form as it has been. Horror archetypes in many other genres.
Popularity of short stories
Paperback originals
Graphic Novels (*The Walking Dead* by Robert Kirkman and *The Raven* by Edgar Allan Poe and multiple adaptors and artists)


Celebrate Horror year round—not just at Halloween

**Authors to Watch:**
- Michael Koryta (*So Cold the River*)
- Adam L. G. Nevill (*The Ritual*)
- Dave Zeltserman (*The Caretaker of Lorne Field*)
- David Wong (*John Dies at the End*)

**Horror on the Web**
Becky Spratford maintains an up-to-date list of Horror resources on her blog, RA for All: Horror (http://raforallhorror.blogspot.com/p/horror-resources.html)

**Horror Writers Association**  (www.horror.org)

**Horror Awards**
- Shirley Jackson Awards http://www.shirleyjacksonawards.org
- Rusa’s Reading List http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/readinglist
- Bram Stoker Awards http://www.horror.org/stokerwinnom.htm

**GENTLE READS:**
- Nostalgic
- Timeless
- Peaceful
- Multi-generational is common
- Uncomplicated but NOT unsophisticated
- No Sex, Violence, Profanity
- Not only Christian fiction

**“Feel-good” Best Sellers**
David Baldacci, John Grisham, James Patterson

**Gentle Reads Classics:**
- Miss Read
- Catherine Marshall
- Paul Gallico
- Jan Karon

**Authors to Know:**

**Sarah Addison Allen**
- Lyrical, evocative prose
- Heartwarming tone
- Family-centered
- Touch of magic/magical realism
- Charming tales of sympathetic heroines and secrets

**Jennifer Chiaverini**
- Heartwarming
- Quilting
- Family and friendship
Mostly contemporary with an occasional historical for backstory
Conversational prose

**Alexander McCall Smith**
- Gentle mysteries and multiple series
- Delve into human nature
- Carefully drawn setting
- Vivid characterizations
- Fascinating cultural and social details

**Nicholas Sparks**
- Sentimental, poignant, sometimes tragic stories of love lost and found
- Gentle approach to issues
- Leisurely paced but dialogue-rich
- Romantic tone

**Adriana Trigiani**
- Charming and amusing family stories
- Romantic tone
- Humorous slices of life
- Crossover with women’s fiction
- Pushes gentleness boundaries
- Complementary nonfiction

**Crossover**
- Historical fiction (Kaye Gibbons, Brock and Bodie Thoene)
- Inspirational fiction and nonfiction (Janette Oke, Brock and Bodie Thoene)
- Literary Fiction (Kent Haruf, Eudora Welty, Kaye Gibbons)
- Cozy Mysteries (Rhys Bowen’s Her Royal Spyness series)
- Gentle Romances (Katie Fforde and Rhys Bowen)
- Personal and family histories, biographies, and memoirs (Mitch Album, Elmer Kelton, James Herriot)
- Women’s Lives and Relationships (Molly Gloss, Janette Oke, Kaye Gibbons, Katie Fforde)

**Trends**
- Edgier—harder to find
- Paranormal elements
- Remains more popular with readers than with publishers

**Authors to Watch**
- Patrick Taylor (*An Irish Country Doctor*)
- William M. Kuhn (*Mrs. Queen Takes the Train*)
- Mary Ann Shaffer (*The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*)
- Helen Simonson (*Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand*)
- Rachel Joyce (*The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*)

**Gentle Reads Resources and Awards**
No official “genre” resources or genre-specific awards.
Several libraries have lists, some annotated
Fiction_L ([http://www.mgpl.org/read-listen-view/fl/flmenu/](http://www.mgpl.org/read-listen-view/fl/flmenu/)) features several lists in the Fiction_L Booklists section
Library Booklists compilation of Gentle reads lists:
http://librarybooklists.org/fiction/adult/inspiration.htm#gentle

**WOMEN’S LIVES AND RELATIONSHIPS**
- Intimate look into lives—emotional pull and a sympathetic link with reader
- Characters and authors are primarily women
- Themes of concern to women: generations of family, relationships, career, women taking charge of lives
- Conflicts from juggling work and home
- Unusual styles with diaries, IMs, etc.

**Classic authors**
- Margaret Mitchell and Danielle Steel
- Jane Austen
- Charlotte Brontë
- Edith Wharton
- Willa Cather

**Authors by Age Group**

**Chick Lit** (Sophie Kinsella, Emily Giffin, Meg Cabot, Marian Keyes, Rainbow Rowell)

**Mom or Hen Lit** (Jennifer Weiner, Sophie Kinsella, Madeleine Wickham, Maria de los Santos, Elin Hilderbrand, Connie Briscoe, Claire Cook)

**Empty Nesters** (Elizabeth Berg, Anne River Siddons, Kristin Hannah, Maeve Binchy, Nancy Thayer)

**50s-60s and up** (Jeanne Ray, Margaret Drabble, Joan Medlicott)

**Authors to know:**

**Elizabeth Berg**
- Gentle, comfortable, family-centered stories
- Lyrical prose
- Difficult topics addressed with care and humor
- Often bittersweet
- Chicago settings

**Sophie Kinsella/Madeleine Wickham**
- Chick Lit and Women’s Fiction
- More lighthearted as Kinsella; more issues as Wickham
- Sympathetic, engaging characters
- Upbeat tone
- Witty, romantic page-turners

**Jodi Picoult**
- Provocative, issue-oriented novels
- Sympathetic characters in extremis
- Disturbing and intriguing
- Intelligent, serious dramas raising difficult questions
- Also Teen and Graphic Novel titles

**Sapphire**
- Tough but compassionate
- Edgy, urban environment
- Strong women in difficult situations
Intelligent, disturbing, provocative
Lyrical prose

**Jennifer Weiner**
Thoughtful but humorous
Snappy dialogue
Feisty heroines
Imaginative story lines
Compelling tales of mothers and career women

**Crossover**
Romance and Gentle Reads (Sarah Addison Allen, Adriana Trigiani, Debbie Macomber, Kristin Hannah, Jo-Ann Mapson, Susan Wiggs)
Historical Fiction (Sandra Dallas, Kaye Gibbons, Thomas Keneally, Lynn Austin—also Inspirational)
Urban Fiction (Nikki Turner, Sister Souljah, Zane)
Memoirs and Nonfiction (Elizabeth Gilbert, Julie Powell, Diana Abu-Jaber, Jen Lancaster)

**Trends**
Multicultural and International (Bharati Mukherjee, Diana Abu-Jaber, Lisa See, Marsha Mehran, Kimberla Lawson Roby, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni)
Paranormal (Sarah Addison Allen, Alice Hoffman, Brunonia Barry, Joanne Harris, Luanne Rice, Sheila Roberts, Susanna Kearsley)

**Authors to Watch**
J. Courtney Sullivan
Jojo Moyes
Laura Moriarty
Marisa de los Santos

**Women’s Lives and Relationships on the Web**
Another genre with no specific resources. Check for lists on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, etc.

**Women’s Lives and Relationships Awards**
Rusa’s Reading List [http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/readinglist](http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/readinglist)
Rita Awards for Novel with Strong Romantic Elements [http://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=1108#RITANSRE](http://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=1108#RITANSRE)

**ROMANCE**
Focus on love relationship between two main characters
Stereotypical hero and heroine
Predictably happy ending
Stories draw readers in; we participate in the romance
Many books are romantic but not romances (Nicholas Sparks, Danielle Steel)
Interesting frames
Books you can pick up and put down without losing the story line.
Characteristic language—rich in adjectives
Romance Publishing
Primarily paperback
$1.44 billion dollar business
Comparison genres: Mysteries $728 million, Relig/Insp $718 million, SF/Fantasy $590 million, Classics and Literary Fiction $471 million.
Largest share of consumer book market (16.7%)

Subgenres—Contemporary; Paranormal; Historical, including Regency; Inspirational; GLBTQ; Ethnic/multicultural; Erotic; Category

Romance Classics
Judith McNaught
Jane Austen
Georgette Heyer
Sharon and Tom Curtis

Romance Authors to Know:
Nora Roberts
From category to paperback and hardcover
3-4 books series
Contemporary
Smart dialog
Passionate, resourceful heroines
Strong, empathetic heroes

Mary Kay Andrews
Aka Kathy Hogan Trocheck
Came to Romance through mystery and women’s fiction
Southern settings and customs, cooking, and antiques frame novels
Breezy style, laugh-out-loud situations and dialog
Sassy heroines
Contemporary settings

Sherrilyn Kenyon
Paranormal romances
Steamy
Humorous
Crossover with Fantasy
Mythology, magic, sex, and vampires
Manga titles

Mary Balogh
Multiple Regency and Historical titles
Addresses issues
Wit and sometimes outrageous humor
Sensual
Details of fashion, social mores, culture
Sympathetic characterizations
Linked novels/series

Beverly Lewis
Christian—Amish romances in Pennsylvania & Ohio
Gentle reads
Hot trend
Issues: relationship to “English” and church controversies
Heartwarming and timeless

**Crossover**
- Women’s Lives and Gentle (Meg Cabot, Debbie Macomber, Susan Wiggs)
- Romantic Suspense (Karen Robards)
- Mystery (Dorothy L. Sayers and many more)
- Science Fiction and Fantasy (Lois McMaster Bujold, Mercedes Lackey, Meljean Brook)
- Adrenaline and Fantasy (Deborah Harkness)

**Trends**
- Erotic Romance (Classic authors—Bertrice Small, Susan Johnson, Thea Devine, Robin Schone; Newer authors—E. L. James, Sylvia Day, Jade Lee, Jaime Sobrato, Brenda Jackson)
- Romantic Comedy (Jennifer Crusie, Katie Fforde, Katie MacAlister, Eloisa James, Georgette Heyer, Julia Quinn, Susan Elizabeth Phillips)
- Inspirational/Christian (Beverly Lewis, Tracie Peterson, Julie Klassen, Francine Rivers, Karen Kingsbury, Wanda Brunstetter)
- Graphic Novels (Diana Gabaldon, Sherrilyn Kenyon)
- Ebooks –Romance writers early adopters
- Multicultural (Benilde Little, Nikki Turner, Mary Monroe, Beverly Jenkins, Anjali Banerjee) and Alternative Lifestyle (E. Lynn Harris, Rita Mae Brown, Emilie Richards, Emma Donoghue)

**Romance Authors to Watch**
- Kristen Callihan
- Susanna Kearsley
- Kristan Higgins
- Meredith Duran

**Romance on the Web**
- All about romance [http://www.likesbooks.com/](http://www.likesbooks.com/)
- Romance Novelists Association (British) [http://www.rna-uk.org/](http://www.rna-uk.org/)
- Romance Writers of America [http://www.rwa.org](http://www.rwa.org)
- Romantic Times [http://www.rtbookreviews.com](http://www.rtbookreviews.com)

**Romance Awards**
- RITA Awards ([http://www.rwa.org/p/cm/lid/fid=535](http://www.rwa.org/p/cm/lid/fid=535))
- Best Books in *Library Journal, Booklist, and Publisher’s Weekly*
- Rusa’s Reading List [http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/readinglist](http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/readinglist)

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